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Controlling Sparrows

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Purdue University Cooperative Extension Service, "Controlling Sparrows" (1981). *Historical Documents of the Purdue Cooperative Extension Service*. Paper 6.
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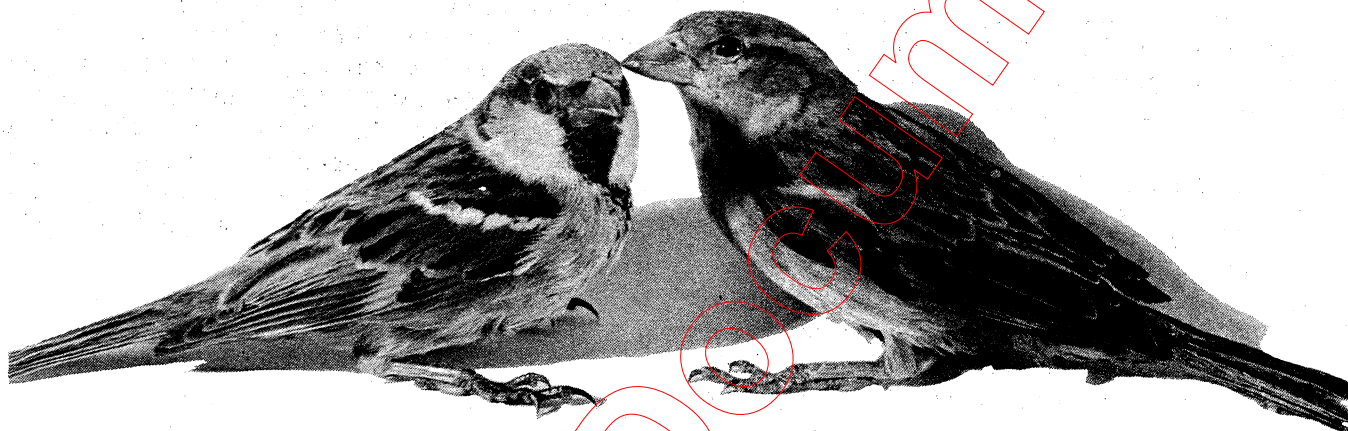
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controlling Sparrows

Developed cooperatively by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and Purdue University Cooperative Extension Service.



Eliminating Nests and Roosts - English sparrow populations can be greatly reduced by destroying nests and eggs at two-week intervals during the spring and summer. Fasten a hook to the end of a long pole for use in tearing down nests under eaves, on rafters, and the like.

The elimination of nesting and roosting sites may offer the best permanent solution to the problem. Thus, to prevent recurring infestations, it may be necessary to remove all or part of the vines from certain buildings. Copings and ledges of some buildings may be blocked with wood or sheet metal strips at an angle to eliminate the

roosting space. Steeples, towers, poultry houses, barn lofts, and similar places should be bird proofed with $3/4$ " or smaller wire mesh (poultry netting).

Trapping - One of the simplest sparrow traps is built similar to a sand sifter, with a frame four ft sq or larger and six inches deep. One side is covered with $3/4$ " mesh poultry netting or similar material. A small opening should permit removal of the trapped birds. It is well to prebait for several days in a spot to attract the birds. To operate the trap, place it over the bait, raise and place an 18" stick (with attached cord) under one

edge surmounted by a small chip to permit its easy withdrawal. Run the cord to a blind some distance away. Two stakes at the back edge of the trap will keep it in alignment. More complicated traps with automatic action can be built or purchased.

Shooting - There are restrictions against the use of firearms within most corporate limits. Where permissible, persistent shooting with .22 caliber rifles (preferably using ammunition loaded with short-range pellets), .410 gauge shotguns, or high-powered air rifles can eliminate a small flock from a given area.

Scaring Devices - Noise-making machines are usually disturbing to humans, but have little permanent effect on roosting sparrows. High frequency sound vibrations, inaudible to humans, are usually ineffective in scaring sparrows. Revolving lights or waving colored flags and balloons likewise have little or no effect.

Shooting roman candles, firecrackers, etc., into roosts is temporarily effective in moving birds.. Streams of water will also move sparrows from roosts. If pyrotechnics or streams of water are to be effective, they must be used persistently until the birds have established themselves elsewhere.

Poisoning - Toxic baits are an economical, effective and reasonably safe method of population reduction when used by experienced personnel. These poisons will kill any animal that consumes a lethal dose. Therefore, they must be used carefully to avoid danger to beneficial wildlife, children, pets, and livestock. All dead birds should be picked up and properly disposed. Any unused bait must be picked up and properly disposed at the end of the control program.

CONSULT STATE AND LOCAL LAWS BEFORE APPLYING CONTROLS

5/81